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LETTERS FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE  
TO HON. HENRY LAURENS, 1782-1783.

*(Continued from the July number.)*

[57]

private

*Addressed:* The Honorable Henry Laurens Esq.

London

Lafayette M<sup>r</sup>.

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Paris April 14<sup>h</sup> 1782

My dear Sir

Our Separation Has Been So Long, our Correspondence So interrupted, that I Bless the Happy Opportunity Which is Now Offered—How often Have I wished for the times When it Was So Very Convenient for us to Communicate With each other—those times, I know, are Present to Your Memory, And You Are Happy to think this friendship of ours Has in Some Instances Been Productive of Public Good.

Whilst I Lamented I Had not Seen You, An Account of

Your Misfortune Reached Head Quarters—What I felt on the Occasion, I Hope it is Needless for me to Mention—the treatment You Met with is So Very Strange that one is at a Loss What to Admire the More, its folly or its insolence—The Law of Nations Being UnRespected, Retaliation Was the only pledge We Had of their Not Blundering You into the Most dreadfull Misfortunes—But I could not Help feeling proud at the Noble, Steady Conduct of My Respectable friend, whom Every instance Has proved to Be a true Representative of America

Every Public Intelligence is Sufficiently known and Private Communications are not Alltogether Safe—for me Only tell you, that on My departure a spirit of Arrangement and Economy Was diffused throughout Every department—Every thing there is improving Very fast, and Upon a Remembrance of our former difficulties, our York town and Valley forge times, You Must feel With me on the Success of the Noble Cause in Which we are Engaged—General Washington, Your Son, and Your friends when I last Heard from them Were in Perfect Health and C<sup>1</sup><sup>st</sup> Laurens Had joined Greene's Colours in the defense of His Native State

the Late Change of Ministry is so far pleasing as Wiggish Appearances, tho' in an Ennemy, Cannot fail to Be Agreeable—As a french Man, as An American I Very Little Care Who Governs Great Britain—Never Shall I forgive (tho' it is pretty well paid for) British Haughtiness and Cruelty to *us Poor Rebels*—But, on account of Humanity at large, I Heartly Wish tho' I am far from Believing, the Sacred flame of Liberty May Some what Be kindled in that Quarter the British Ministry Are Going to fall into a mistake—too Late it is By far to think of Partial Negotiations—in the Mean while they are Loosing time and Ground, and By and By they will See their Error when I Hope a General peace will take place—Ms franklin's Letters, and my Verbal Communications to Ms Young will make you Acquainted with our Opinion—on Every Account, I must My dear friend, insist on the fact that Respects Your parole and Exchange

Some public Business I am Charged with By Congress Have to this Moment differed My Return—I Hope Sailing in the fine days of May, and (in case I cannot see You) I will Be Happy to Receive Your Commands—With the Warmest Attachment and the Highest Regard I Have the Honor to Be

Your Most Obedient Servant and Affectionate friend

Lafayette

P. S. At the time of Your Misfortune M<sup>re</sup> de Lafayette Made Vain Efforts to Contrive Her letters to you—I just now Hear You Have not Received some Monney You Expected, and I know you Hate Accepting any offer from the people about you—Give me leave to inclose a small letter of Credit which will Be Enlarged if convenient—Ms Young<sup>1</sup> is in Hurry and I must of Course Be in Haste—adieu

[THE INCLOSURE.]

*Addressed:* Messieurs  
Mess<sup>rs</sup>: Bewickes  
& Mourgue  
Londres

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Paris ce 12 Avril 1782

Messieurs

Conformement aux Desirs de Monsieur Le Marquis De La Fayette nous vous prions De Tenir a La Driposition De Monsieur H<sup>r</sup> Laurens La Somme De Cinq Cens Livres Sterlings que vous pouvez Lui Compton & porter au Debit de notre Compte en nous en remittant Les Recus De Monsieur H<sup>r</sup> Laurens ancien President du Congres Americain

Nous avons l'honneur d'Etre, Tres parfaitement

Messieurs

Yor Tres bien Serv<sup>t</sup>

Leloutent & Comp<sup>r</sup>

Messieurs Bewickes Mourgue—Londres

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<sup>1</sup>Moses Young secretary to Henry Laurens.

[58]

Paris August the 20<sup>th</sup> 1782

My dear Sir

With an Heartfelt Satisfaction I Have Received Your Wellcome favor of the 6<sup>th</sup> inst, and Have Been Made truly Happy in the Recovery of My Correspondence with My Good and Respectable friend—the Honor of Getting Acquainted With Your Son, and My dear C<sup>101</sup> Laurens's Brother<sup>1</sup> Has Been to Me an Additional pleasure—I Hope in a fortnight I will Be able to pay My Respects to the Remainder of the family, and Had it Not Been on Account of Your Health Should Be Very Angry With You for Your Passing So Near Paris Without Paying us a friendly Visit

I am Sorry to Hear, My dear Sir, Your Health is So Much impaired and Strongly Advise you to pay a Great Attention to its Recovery—I Expect the pleasure to know from You How You do, and Your letters will Ever Afford me a Sincere Satisfaction

The Conduct of the Ennemy towards You Has Been So Very Unjust, Absurd, and Barbarous, that I am Glad You intend to Represent it properly to Congress—thank God, You are out of their Hands, and I think, Hereafter, the Climate of England Will Ever disagree with you, and the Behaviour of the Ennemy Will Still Encourage the proper idea you Have from the Beginning Entertained of that Haughty, Barbarous Nation

I Have Been Enquiring for the Gentleman to whom the Bill Was directed—He will not be in town Before Sunday, at Which time My Secretary Has orders to Wait upon Him with a letter from me, and I will Endeavour to Manage that Affair in the Best way I Can

You Ask me How the Work of Peace is Going on—Well, My dear friend, it does not go on very fast—Ms Fitz Herbert, Lately an Envoy to Bruscelles, is Now in Paris and Has Powers to treat with those of the Belligerent Nations—Ms Oswald will Have Powers to treat with

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<sup>1</sup>This reference is to Henry Laurens, Jr.

America—But Negotiations Must all go the Same step, and prove the Character You Gave me of Lord Shelburne, from other informations it Appears the intentions of that Minister are not Easy to Be known, nor His protestations Safe to Be depended Upon—it is for the present difficult to form an Opinion, But in the Mean while I See with pleasure that the American plenipotentiaries and the Ministers of france do perfectly Understand, and Are perfectly Satisfied with each other

M<sup>d</sup> de Lafayette is Very Much obliged to your Attention—She Has Heartly felt for You in Every circumstance of Your Captivity, and She would think Herself Very Happy in the Honor of Your Acquaintance

I Wish You a Better Health, My dear friend, and With the Highest Regard, the Most perfect Attachement I Have the Honor to Be

Your Affectionate and Most  
obedient Humble Servant  
Lafayette

I am Sorry You do not Accept of the Appointment of Congress—I would be Very Happy to go over with you to America, and intend setting out Before long—But will Be able in a few days to Be more particular on that point.

*Endorsed:* Marquis de lafayette  
20<sup>th</sup>. Aug<sup>r</sup>. 1782 Rec<sup>d</sup>. 25<sup>th</sup>—  
Answ<sup>d</sup>. 3<sup>d</sup>. Septem—

[59]

Paris September the 19<sup>th</sup> 1782

dear Sir

I Have Been Honoured With Your favor from Nantz, Wherein I See You think it Necessary for You to Return to England—it is Said You Are By this time on Your Way to Calais, and My Letter Will Either Wait there for Your Arrival, or Be Sent After You to the Country Where You Have determined to Embark

Inclosed is an Answer to My Application for Your Monney, and I am Sorry to find it is Not Very Satisfactory—I Will do My Best to obtain it, and Hope I May take Hold of a Moment when the Gentleman is not, As He Says, Quite So *desargenté*

You are of opinion, My dear Sir, that England feels a Reluctance To treat with America as an independent power—it is pretty Usual, However, to Call people By their own Names—One day or other, the Court of London, May Be in Earnest, and then, to Be Sure, She will not intrude upon us with so strange an idea as that of treating Upon an Unequal footing— You and I Have seen times, when our situation was not Quite So Happy, and yet we did not take the Continent of America to Be Any Way inferior to the island of Britain

in Case you Land Before me Upon the Shore of Liberty, Please to Remember me Most Affectionately to All friends, and Particularly to our Beloved General, and to L<sup>t</sup>. C<sup>101</sup> Laurens

I Wish You a Good Voyage Home, and Need not, I Hope, Assuring You of the High Regard, and Affectionate Sentiments I Have the Honor to Be With

Your Obedient H<sup>bl</sup> Servt  
Lafayette

dear Sir

*Endorsed:* Marquis delafayette  
29 Septem 1782 Recd. 27<sup>th</sup>.

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Paris July the 6<sup>th</sup> 1783

dear Sir

I Have Been Honoured with Your kind Letter for which I offer You My Best thanks—I Hope You May find Some Benefit in drinking Bath Waters, and the pleasure of your Correspondence will Be Extremely Agreeable—By Your Colleagues You will no doubt Be Acquainted with the Arrival of the Washington Packet—She Had a fine pas-

sage and Carried over the Ratification of the Preliminaries—our intelligences are not, However, Quite Compleat, And the french ship, triumph, Must now Be on Her way to france—it Appears ms Livingston Had a Mind to Resign, But Robert Moriss Had determined to Remain in office, at Least Untill Many Arrangements are Settled—the Army Have Been Sent Home Upon furlough, and will, they say, Be provided for at the time when the treaty Arrives— No Great Hurry, it Appears, in the Evacuation of New York—in spite of the preliminary Articles; they are sending of Negroes, which infringement is Accounted for Upon this principle, that when they Came within the British lines, it was promised them they should Be set free—there is ten to one However those Men are sent to West india Markets— General Washington was Hearty and Happy, and I Have Been Warned that further intelligence would Be sent to me By the triumph—So that I am waiting for Her—Nothing as Yet determined in the diplomatic Line—So far I Can tell, But Have Little trust on a Letter that must Be Delivered through so many itching fingers in the post offices

Curious it is, My dear Sir, that Nothing Can Be Settled in the British Ministry—Since it Comes Round, the Pitt Party will Again Have their turn— Whoever Be there, it is Now so clear to them they Had Better Court the friendship of America, that every sensible Man, after a *Peace* is effected, will do His Best to obtain a *Reconciliation*—too very different things By the Way—

I Have some days ago wrote to ms knox and doctor Bancroft, But as I do not Hear from them, I must give you a trouble which in your present state of Health I wished to avoid— You know what Has past Between Sir Henry Clinton and Myself— Inclosed you will find my Letter and His Answer, Both of which if it Has not Been Already done, I beg you will Have printed in the News papers under this Simple Head—*Letter from the M<sup>rs</sup> de Lafayette to Sir Henry Clinton*—and *Answer from Sir Henry Clinton to the Marquis* But if g<sup>nl</sup> clinton is Near at Hand, I beg you will pay Him a Compliment on the



occasion—He cannot, I should think Have Any objection to the printing of those Letters

I Have a Letter from C<sup>101</sup> Ogden who is just landed in france, and Notifies He Has dispatches to me—in Case there is any thing important I will do myself the Honor to Communicate My intelligences—My little family are well, and join with mde de Lafayette and myself in presenting you, Miss Laurens, and your Son with our Best Compliments—Adieu, My dear Sir, I Hope it is Needless for me to Assure you of the High Regard I Have the Honor to Be with very affectionately

dear Sir

Your obedient Humble Servant  
Lafayette

*Endorsed:* Marquis de la Fayette  
Paris 6<sup>th</sup>. July 1783 —